

OPEN ARMS UPDATE

We apologize that you haven't heard from us for a couple of months, but we have some new people on board and we are working on plans to merge Open Arms, PFLAG, and the former Rainbow Gazette into one joint community Newsletter. The newsletter will be named Michiana's Rainbow Gazette and will be a publication of the Michiana Pride Coalition. There will be an editorial committee with representative from all groups including Open Arms. We have been working on a Mission Statement and Editorial Policies and the committee is planning on the first issue to come out in January. The MRG will be a 12 to 16 page newsletter with wider coverage and more input from different community organizations. There is still a lot to be decided and adjustments to be made, but we do know this much: 1) our mailing list will be kept confidential as always, 2) there will be a separate page of OA news included that we do not want included in the wider distribution, 3) we will do a three month trial to see how much cost is involved (printing and postage will increase) to determine adjustments to our subscribers, and 4) we will be depending on input from our readers to see how they feel about our efforts.

NEW OPEN ARMS E-MAIL ADDRESS IS OpenArms@planetout.com

MICHIANA PRIDE COALITION

There is a new community effort regarding the quality of life for the lesbian persons in Michiana. A group of persons representing some churches, organizations, schools and individuals have begun to meet on the third Wednesday of every month from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. at Central United Methodist Church to discuss the needs of the lesbian community. It is the hope of the group to accomplish some positive things as a coalition that couldn't be undertaken as individuals. Anyone who is interested is welcome to attend. Editorial note: Marcia and I have been attending, it has been exciting seeing positive energy and community building. One of the members of the Coalition has authored a web site (<http://www.gaymichian.org/>) and, if you have any info you want them to post, send it to gaymichiana@mail.com. This will enable us to get community news and information out sooner.

UP COMING EVENTS

Karen Williams, celebrates Black History Month Sat, Feb. 24, 2001 at 8 p.m. at the Madame Walker Theatre, 617 Indiana Ave., Indianapolis, IN. Tickets are \$22 in advance, \$24 at the door. Dance immediately following the show (entrance by ticket) Tickets available at Out Word Bound Bookstore, 625 N East St, Indpls. For more information contact Luna Sea Productions (317) 951-9100

The Phoenix Theatre is presenting the Women's Circle Series. Of note is The Vagina Monologues by Eve Ensler, starring Lisa Koch (this is one funny lady) Feb. 22 - March 18, 2001. For a complete schedule, call 317/635-PLAY, email Phoenixxt@oaktree.net, or log on www.phoenixtheatre.org

"Shake it Fast"

Xmas Party 2000
Madame Walker Ballroom
617 Indiana Avenue, Indianapolis
Friday, December 15, 2000
9:00 PM until 1:00 am
\$10.00 per person
Music by Spinmeister
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COMMUNITY EVENTS

POST-THANKSGIVING POTLUCK AND BONFIRE at the Southside Church, 1329 E. Jackson Rd, S. Bend, Sat. Nov. 25th, 7 PM
(See Flyer Insert)

WORLD AID'S DAY CELEBRATION, Wycamp Hall at IUSB, 7:30 PM, Thurs. Nov. 30th.

LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP meets every Tuesday at 7 PM at the Southside Church.

GAY BOWLING LEAGUE every Friday AT 7:30 PM, Chippewa Lanes, 225 W. Chippewa, S. Bend.

BARNES & NOBLE'S GAY & LESBIAN READING GROUP meets on the 4th Wednesday, 8:30 P.M. For info call 219-277-9482

MICHIANA'S GAY YOUTH GROUP... for GLBT youth under 20 years of age, continues to offer to the youth community a positive and educational perspective on health issues, relationships with their families, coming out issues and history of the community. The support group will continue with the same (YIG) guidelines that have been used over the past eight years in a peer group setting. For more information call 219-235-9396 All calls are confidential.

THE TREVOR HOTLINE National toll-free suicide hotline for gay and questioning youth. It's open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Teens can call 1-800-850-8078, where they can talk to trained counselors. Visit www.trevorproject.com

THE LGBT SWITCHBOARD is a non-profit organization that provides assistance and/or referral to the LGBT community in Bloomington, IN as well as surrounding areas. The phone line is answered daily between 6 PM -12AM by professionally trained volunteers who direct callers to various professionals &/or agencies for assistance. 812-336-7660 or 1-888-882-5428(LGBT)

THE SWITCHBOARD... takes calls every night from 7-11PM 317-251-7955 Callers can discuss issues such as coming out, transgender, marriage and other topics. All calls are confidential. Also on the at www.gayindy.org/switchboard/

GAY & LESBIAN HELPLINE/PEER LISTENING LINE The peer listening line is a nationwide toll free number staffed by GLBT youth who provide information, referrals, and support to callers Monday thru Friday 4PM-10PM EST 1-888-340-GLBT(4528). The gay & lesbian help line does the same work Monday - Friday 6PM-11PM, Sat. & Sun. 5PM-10PM EST 1-800-399-PEER (7337)

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN (NOW) Meetings are open to the public and will be the 4th Wed. from 7 - 9PM of each month, Lower Level...St. Joseph County Public Library, 304 S. Main, S. Bend, more info: Penny 291-2342, Rhoda 288-7123

KALAMAZOO GAY/LESBIAN RESOURCE CENTER, C.A.R.E.S Building, Lower Level
629 Pioneer Street, Kalamazoo, Mich. 49001 voice mail: (616) 349-4234

LESBIAN GROWTH & SUPPORT GROUP Fort Wayne Woman's Bureau at 3521 Lake Ave. Suite 1, Info....219-424-7977
Also in Fort Wayne...**G/L/B/I/T Help line** 219-744-1199 available Mon.-Thurs., 7-10 PM, Fri.-Sat, 7-Midnight, Sun, 8-9 PM
FORT WAYNE IYG..... a support group for GLBT youth under 21 years of age Information: 219-422-7597

BLOOMINGTON OUTREACH, informal support group for lesbian & bisexual women 812-855-3849

NORTH/CENTRAL ALLIANCE Located in the Kokomo, Tipton, Logansport, Marion and Frankfort area of North/Central Indiana....North/Central Alliance, P.O. Box 186, Kokomo, IN. 46903.. Voice Mail 317-454-8868

PFLAG (Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Meetings are from 2 to 4 PM the 4th Sunday of the month at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 17195 Cleveland Road, South Bend. Info.....Nancy 219-277-2684, or write P.O. Box 4195, S. Bend, 46634

PFLAG in the St. Joseph/Berrien County area, group meetings take place the 3rd Wed. of each month. Info...call 616-429-2957

November Birthdays

11, Nancy N.
16, Barb F.
16th Great Amer. Smoke-out
19, Sue B.
21, Suze
22, Carol C.
26, Sheryl M.

December Birthdays

1, Liz W. WORLD AIDS DAY
2, Vivian, Christina O.
3, Kim W.
4, Lois W.
5, Jackie N.
6, Julie Kimball
12, Kelly
13, Tonya L.
19, Christine L., Lisa H.
27, Carol S.
30, Mick
31, Andrea N.

OPEN ARMS MISSION STATEMENT

Open Arms exists to disseminate diverse information of interest to the Michiana lesbian community. *Open Arms* is mailed monthly in a security envelope with a PO Box return address only. Our mailing list is kept confidential and never shared with other publications or special interest groups.

Please send submissions to:
Open Arms, P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, IN. 46546
e-mail address: OpenArms@planetout.com

The Amazon Trail by Lee Lynch

BREAKUP BACKLASH

Our Vermont activists are being subjected to a terrible backlash because the law has recognized their unions as legitimate. Unlike, say, hedgehogs or toucans, gay Vermont couples can now enjoy some official recognition since the state ruled that Civil Unions must be recognized. There are some Vermonters, and I would imagine, some deep pockets from out of state, who are intensely distressed by our validation and are, I've read, campaigning vocally, visibly and nastily to undo this progress.

Meanwhile, in Vermont and elsewhere, domestic partners are untying their knots at what seems to be an accelerated rate. We're in Breakup Mode, gay America, on local as well as national levels.

My reaction to each breakup reminds me of the stages of grief, because I go through them involuntarily time after time. When I hear that a lesbian couple is splitting, and to a lesser degree, a gay male couple, my very first reaction is a feeling of betrayal: the anger stage. How could they/she/he do this to each other and to the community? How could they set such a bad example, be such poor role models to the rest of us — how could they demonstrate the instability straight society predicts for and expects of us?

After that first wave washes over me the second arrives — I feel threatened as hell. I know lover and I are solid, yet I go into a tailspin of fear. Dumb? Yes. Self-destructive? Yes. Bad for the relationship? Yes. As dangerous as it is, because it demonstrates a lack of faith in Lover and in us that I certainly don't feel, I don't know how to stop this response except to turn it into a check-in. If we can gently and even wordlessly ask, "Are we okay?" we can make this an opportunity to improve things if the need is there.

Then major sadness sets in. If I'm at all close to the severed partners I miss them as a couple and don't have a clue how to act with these suddenly changed people. And I miss the half who left, as one or the other is bound to move out of our accustomed circle of friends.

Through it all I feel a sense of incredulity. One minute all seems well, the next the world as I perceived it has exploded, and I'm thrown via *deja vu* back to my personal tragedies. How can we love/live with someone for years and suddenly It's Over? Like an astonished lover left behind I wander around muttering, "I can't believe it. I can't believe it."

Selfishly, I embrace the thank-goodness-it-wasn't-us stage. Someone else's breakup makes me appreciate what the Goddess has given me. Even beyond the check-in process, it can draw Lover and me closer. Some may call this stage hanging on for dear life, but I like to think of it as a gift, some good salvaged from a difficult time.

NOTICE: NEW L.L.s (LAYOUT LESBIANS) AT WORK. Please bear with us while we are learning the program. Any omissions or errors will be corrected next time. Sorry for the lack of graphics, etc. We are still on a (steep) learning curve.

Blame is another stage, not necessarily of either member of the couple, or of a third party who may have precipitated the split, but of myself and of the community at large. Could I have helped? Can't the community do a better job of looking after its own? And with blame comes closing the barn door after the horse has left. How can I help lessen the pain and trauma for the couple? What if I've been friends with both? Do I have the energy and desire to reach out to each? If one is left alone while the other has someone new for comfort, do I automatically chose the abandoned spouse?

I need to remember that not all breakups are bad in the long run, and not all relationships *should* last forever. This is totally annoying: there's no good guy-bad guy. I'm left with no one to blame.

Of course I can't really do much of anything. I'm just a friend or an acquaintance and it's none of my business. What I have right here with Lover *is* my business. Relationships take care and nurturing. While in the end all I can do is accept the parting of couples I know, I share something very precious with Lover. Perhaps the best thing I can do for myself, for us, for the community, is to do whatever is in my power to help Lover and me to thrive so we can be strong enough to stay together, to be here for our friends and community and to withstand the punishment of Vermont backlashes.

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Notre Dame Women's Home Basketball Schedule

11-24 Champs of the Coaches vs. Challenge on ESPN at 1:30/4:00 p.m. EST
 11-27 Fordham 7:00 p.m.
 12-6 Villanova 7:00 p.m.
 12-3 at Honda Elite Classic in Florida on ESPN2 1:30 p.m.
 12-9 Purdue 7:00 p.m.
 12-18 Western Michigan 7:00 p.m.
 12-31 Rice 1:00 p.m.
 1-6-01 Rutgers 12:00 p.m.
 1-13 Virginia Tech 2:00 p.m.
 1-15 Connecticut (ESPN) 2:00 p.m.
 1-31 Providence 7:00 p.m.
 2-7 Pittsburgh 7:00 p.m.
 2-20 Miami 7:00 p.m.
 2-24 Georgetown 1:00 p.m.
 3-29 and 3-31 FINAL 4 in St. Louis, MO

*Note: All games are broadcast on 1620 am.

Notre Dame Women's Basketball has just signed three of the Super 25 players. They include 6-1 Jacqueline Batteast of South Bend, 6-2 Kathy Flecky of COL. And 6-3 Teresa Borton of WASH. Also coming next year are Allison Bustamante from Miami, Jill Krause from IL and Kelsey Wicks from WY.



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The "Invincible" kd lang in Concert by Becki G.

Finally, August 19th had arrived and there was excitement in the air. I was about to embark on a trip to see my favorite vocalist. I was nervous that morning and had to rely on computerized directions to find my friend's new home in Valpo, then together we made our way to Chicago to attend my fourth, and my friend's first, kd lang concert.

Thankfully, my friend knew the "ins and outs" of the Windy City, which got us to our destination safely and with time to spare. Another friend was gracious enough to arrange hotel accommodations at the Congress, directly across the street from the Auditorium Theater, where kd would be playing that night.

On this warm summer evening, how appropriate that lang would be promoting her newest CD, "Invincible Summer." This CD is a celebration of her domesticity with Leisha Hailey, her partner of five years, and the fact that she took a much-needed break and fell in love with her "music" all over again.

I've enjoyed all the venues where lang has graced the stage, but my two favorites would have to be the Rosemont Theater, for its acoustics and ambiance, and now the Auditorium Theater, which is equal in acoustics and grandeur.

lang's fans are a diversified group, but mainly consists of womyn - beautiful womyn of all ages, shapes, colors, and sizes. That's an awesome experience in itself. You could just feel the excitement waiting to burst. In my experience, the crowds at lang's performances are generally respectful and congenial. It is not hard to make new friends

and have free-flowing conversations.

That evening the couple in front of us were sharing their binoculars with us. Not that we needed them but we "oohed and ahhed" with the closeness we achieved, tracing every outline of this singer's face. I guess die hard fans are like that... no matter how close you are, you still bring out the binoculars just to take a little more in!!!

kd lang has a powerful, one-of-a-kind voice, but she also has a powerful presence. She's an entertainer that immediately commands the audience's attention. lang has a great sense of humor and wit, with a philosophical slant on the way she perceives life, love and the world.

According to an interview in the October Curve magazine article, she describes her latest work, "Invincible Summer" as the "Yang" to "Ingenués's" "Yin". "The title represents my discovering of my 'invincible summer,' my core, my sunshine, which is my music," says lang. "Working for 15 years straight, I got a little disillusioned.... I didn't have time to reflect on my career, I started to feel more fulfilled and, as a result, more inspired." lang adds, "When I made the discovery that life itself is my art and that music is my craft, a tremendous weight lifted off me and I started to enjoy life a lot more."

I have followed kd's work from her "torch and twang" days through her many musical styles up to her present creation. I can truly say that her gifted voice is always evolving into something better and better. Although she promoted "Invincible Summer" on this tour, she always woos the audience with her other legendary hits such as "Crying" and "Constant Cravings" to name a couple.

I'm looking forward to seeing this extraordinary singer again. Next time she tours, I encourage everyone to make a "concerted" effort to see this "big boned gal" from Southern Alberta. This womyn delivers.

Menopause, Osteoporosis and You

Unlike most diseases, osteoporosis is a silent disease with few warning signs. When a woman enters menopause, the bones in her body become thinner and, therefore, weaker. According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, up to half of all women over age 50 will break a bone due to osteoporosis in their lifetimes. Bone loss usually occurs without symptoms. In the first six years after menopause you can lose as much as one third of the bone in your vertebra. What you might think is simple back pain could be spinal fractures.

All women past menopause may be at risk for osteoporosis. However, if you are Caucasian or Asian, have a slender body build, have a family history of osteoporosis, have had an early menopause due to surgery, smoke, drink alcohol, are not getting enough calcium and Vitamin D, or not getting enough exercise, your risks are even greater.

Take a good look at your eating habits. The National Institute of Health recommends 1,000 to 1,500 mg of calcium per day for women after menopause and a daily intake of 400 to 800 IU per day of Vitamin D. Vitamin D is needed for the body to absorb calcium and can be found in egg yolks, saltwater fish, liver, and fortified dairy products. Also, take a good look at your physical activity. Weight bearing, low-stress exercise, such as walking, is also helpful in preventing Osteoporosis.

If you have any of the increased risk factors that were stated above, make a note to discuss it with your doctor on your next visit. He or she may recommend a painless bone density test to determine if you need prescription medication to maintain bone mass.

R. G., RN



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NEWS TIDBITS

Betty DeGeneres's new book **JUST LIKE A MOM** is now available in bookstores. This is recommended as required reading for those on your list who still haven't quite absorbed Betty's message of tolerance and understanding.

2000 Election—There were pro-choice gains in both the House and the Senate, but the anti-choice majority remains. Senate gained 2, House gained 3 and Gubernatorial offices gained. 2.

Gay.com and PlanetOut announced they are joining out of a desire for a stronger combination. They will continue to have separate sites, but together they will have 1.6 million members. They hope that these numbers will net the gay community more power in corporate America. PlanetOut is also pending acquisition of The Advocate and Out. In addition to planetout.com and gay.com, check out planetproject.com.

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Kim and I are independent distributors of a wonderful line of all natural, herbal weight loss products, vitamins, dietary supplements, concentration aids, ect. We approached this venture with much skepticism; but much to our surprise and delight, we quickly overcame that. In the short time that we have utilized the products ourselves—we feel much more energetic and have each lost 30+ pounds. We are firm believers in the quality and efficiency of this line of products and would like to help you become a believer too! So, if you need to lose a few pounds but hate to diet, want to feel more energetic, or want to increase your ability to focus and concentrate —**CALL US —WE CAN HELP!**

Gloria Frankel and the Seahorse II Cabaret: Dancing against Homophobia for 26 Years by Sissy Van Dyke

If you have ever been to the Seahorse II Cabaret, which is located at 1902 Western Avenue in South Bend, you certainly will see and probably will have met the club's owner, Gloria Frankel. Gloria is a very attractive woman with stylishly trimmed gray hair, light-blue eyes, and a quick smile. She is a pleasant, soft-spoken woman, but beneath her calm, friendly exterior lies the spirit of a warrior and a survivor. It is this indomitable spirit that has enabled the Seahorse to overcome adversity and remain in business nearly twenty-six years.

Gloria was born and raised in South Bend and, outside of a couple of years in New York City and Atlanta, she has lived here her entire life. She admits that this was "a pretty tough place to grow up in" as an openly gay woman. When she was growing up there were a few gay establishments, but there were no dance clubs for gay people. "They wouldn't allow two men or two women to dance. So that was probably my main reason for opening the bar, because gay people didn't have a place of their own."

Dancing has always been an important part of gay life and, in Gloria's opinion, when they took away their right to dance together, "they took away their right to be gay." The Seahorse was not only the first gay bar to have a dance permit, it was the first club of its type in South Bend. "It was the time of disco, and we were the first real dance club in the area, straight or gay. We were the first to have the lighting, the first with the shows.... We had a lot of firsts."

Gloria says that her main goal has always been to create a supportive environment where gay people could be themselves. She felt that in the early 70s "Gay people were just getting stepped on a lot." She opened the Seahorse to provide a space that was not only safe but welcoming. "I think we should have a place where, as gay people, you could bring your family into and feel proud of your establishment, and that you could spend an evening and not have to feel like you're in some little divey area." She adds, "I always wanted to give them a place that they could be proud of and say, 'Hey, this is where we go to party, where we go to have fun.'"

The tasteful décor is one of the most noticeable things about the Seahorse, and it lives up to the "cabaret" in its name by featuring a raised stage, professional lighting and sound systems in both the stage and dance areas, booths and tables for privacy, mirrors and a stainless steel dance floor.

In spite of the festive atmosphere, the Seahorse has frequently found itself on the front line of the battle against homophobia and intolerance. In 1981 it was one of three gay bars on Western Avenue that were firebombed and completely destroyed. However, unlike the other two bars, Gloria held her ground by refusing to allow the destruction to chase her out of business. Although the bombing resulted in over \$100,000 in damage, not only did Frankel rebuild, but she reopened within 10 days of the incident.

"We'd work all night, and the carpenters would come in during the day. Then we'd come in the next night and start again."

Gloria admits, "If it wasn't for the support of the gay people, we'd never have opened. They really rallied around us. People that maybe you didn't see all the time but, boom, they were there. This was right after the Anita Bryant thing, and people were finally coming to grips with their gay identities and started to come out more."

Despite of the community's involvement, rebuilding was no easy task, especially since the bombing took place in December and the middle of winter. "I think we had 35 people twenty-four hours a day. We even slept in the bar to make sure we weren't vandalized. Talk about cold! Oh! But it was such a close, good feeling of unity."

Gloria has earned the love and respect of the community by transforming the club into a source of support for gay people. During the height of the AIDS epidemic, the bar was one of the few sources of anonymous testing in the area. "We really pushed people to get out there and get the test, and got the literature out to them, and really tried to get their eyes open, because they didn't realize the crisis they were in."<

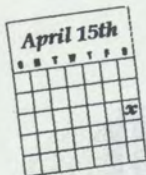
In 1986 the Seahorse was once again under fire, this time from the city of South Bend, who tried to shut down the club by not renewing its liquor license. "They knew it was a gay bar. They tried to come down on us about not having adequate parking." However, once again, the community joined in the fight to keep the bar open, even going so far as to bring this new injustice to the attention of the television program, "60 Minutes." The City backed down before the discrimination was brought to national attention, but their reporters had been standing by to come in, "if the City would have taken it any further." Looking back on the incident, Gloria says, "The funny thing about it was that, after it was all said and done, the City Attorney said, 'Well, if we would have known you represented a minority, we would not have gone after you.' You know, that's sad."

The Seahorse II Cabaret has received a number of honors, including five First Place awards in the Chicago Pride Parade and Frankel received an achievement award from the Chicago Better Business Association. While Gloria is proud of these awards, she says that her greatest success has been having been able to "be there for gay people. To give them a home bar that they can be proud of. In my heart, that's my biggest accomplishment."

Frankel attributes the bar's success to her commitment to "keep up with the times" by offering high quality male and female drag shows, music, light and video shows and other activities. "We try to keep you entertained," she says. "We go out and spend our money because I think the people should get something back for their dollar." The Seahorse sponsors a women's softball league, has an in-house dart league, and features benefits throughout the year for different organizations such as AIDS Ministry and AIDS Assist.

Some upcoming events are "Women's Weekend" on November 10th and 11th, which will feature performances by and primarily for women; and the 26th Anniversary celebration on December 4th, which will offer food, dancing and a special show. As always, according to Frankel, everyone is welcome to these events. "My motto has always been, I don't care if you're gay, bi, tri or whatever, as long as you know this is a gay bar when you walk in. This is first and foremost a gay bar. If you want to come in and sit down with us, you're more than welcome."

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Open Arms

November 2000

The Newsletter is in transition, and great things are about to happen! Please hang in there with us! Meanwhile, Just a couple of news worthy notes regarding happenings in the community.

November 25, 2000

November 25th (the Saturday after Thanksgiving) at 6:00 we will have a Potluck dinner at the Southside Christian Church (not a church affiliated event, but a spacious and safe place for us to gather). Please come! Bring a dish to pass and Bring a Friend! And Pass the Word! After we may have some game tables and also a movie or if you want you can just sit and visit with other womyn.

Support Group Puts on a New Face

We will continue to meet at the Southside Christian Church at 7 pm but the meeting will be held on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month.

Calendar of Events

We hope to have a dance in December and a planned gathering every month. If you have any suggestions or comments we welcome them.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions you can call Lynn at (219) 259-6801 or e-mail her at Fourlyn@att.net for any of the above events.